

NORTHERN ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION,

Address delivered by the President, Mr. JOSEPH
OSWALD, F.R.I.B A., at the opening of the Winter
Session, November 14th, 1894.

Introductory.

In the name of the Association, I have the privilege to-night of greeting its members on the occasion of the commencement of another Session, which promises (judging by the published syllabus) to equal, nay excel, in interest and value all preceding ones.

As this is the first occasion we have come together, in general meeting assembled, since you called me to the Presidential Chair, I take the opportunity now afforded me of expressing my appreciation of the honour thus conferred upon me, and to thank you cordially for it.

Age and strength of Association.

Yesterday, the 13th inst., was the birthday of the Association. It then completed the 36th year of its existence. During this period, it has undergone changes and chances as all things mortal must, but it survives, to-day, in sturdy middle age, healthy, vigorous and hopeful for the future. On its roll there are now (including those elected this evening) 42 Members, 49 Associates, and 35 Students, a total of 126; exceeding all previous records, and being an increase of 9 Members, 5 Associates, and 6 Students (that is 20 altogether) since last year at this time.

Early Work of Association.

To many of our present constituents, the early history of the Association may not be very well known. I have been occasionally asked: What has the Association ever done for the profession? A question which, asked in good faith, deserves an answer; but which, too often made in another spirit, displays a wilful ignorance of facts. Bear with me then while I refresh the memory of those who already know, and enlighten those who do not, as to some points connected with the early days of our Association, which, I think, should not be overlooked. Its activity more recently is vouched for by the yearly increase in the number of members.

An old proverb ("The wisdom of many and the wit of one") says that a worm trodden on will turn at last, and the formation of this Association was due to a circumstance which vindicates the adage. A local competition was, at that time, being promoted, the conditions of which were flagrantly unfair. Twenty-seven Architects practising in the district met together by common consent, not 100 yards from this spot on the 13th November, 1858, to protest against these conditions; and embraced the opportunity to combine together for the purpose of promoting the advancement and elevation of their profession. So out of evil came good. The proposal to form an Alliance of the various similar societies then existing in the kingdom emanated from this Association, as far back as 1860. It drafted the scheme upon the lines of which the Architectural Alliance, as it was called, was subsequently established and maintained for many years. Our Association was also, I believe, the very first (for it did so in 1861) to formulate a Scale of Professional Charges, which, with only slight modification, is now the recognised scale of the profession throughout the kingdom. It was, also from its outset, active in offering suggestions to promoters of competitions, now the general practice of the Institute and all Local Societies. The nett result has been the amelioration (at least) of many evils.

Alliance with R.I.B.A.

The Architectural Alliance, it is true, in name no longer exists; but its place is more than filled by that wider alliance which has been established between the Royal Institute of British Architects and various Societies of Architects throughout the Kingdom, fifteen in number. This arrangement, comparatively of recent date, is destined, we cannot doubt, to confer many benefits upon the Provincial Branches, and also upon the Central Institute, and through them all upon the profession at large.

Nine of the Societies I have mentioned are represented upon the governing and deliberative body of the Royal Institute, in London, in the persons of their Presidents. This Association has the good fortune to be one of the nine so represented, and I have, therefore, the honour, on your behalf, of a seat at the Council Board of the R.I.B.A.

Your Presidents (being Fellows of the R.I.B.A.) will be entitled to that distinction so long, and so long only, as the Northern Association comprises within its ranks a sufficient number of Fellows and Associates of the Institute, as compared with other allied Societies; and, therefore, I would appeal to those who are eligible, or who are willing to make themselves eligible, to become members of the R.I.B.A. Also, I would like to see all existing members of the Institute resident within the two Northern Counties of Northumberland and Durham (which have been allotted to our Association as its Province) enrolled within our ranks. Out of 35 such, only

some six or eight remain outside, and I venture to suggest to these gentlemen, and also to all other honourable practitioners within our Province not being already members of either body, that by holding themselves aloof they are neglecting an obligation almost tantamount to a duty. I have heard some of our professional brethren ask, "What will I *gain* by becoming a member?" That, I submit, is not the question. The real question is: "What good can I *do*?" And surely no man, however modest, can esteem himself so lightly as to deem himself powerless for good to his profession and to his neighbours in it. Manifestly, there can be no method of exerting such influence so readily and effectively as by meeting on common ground, under the auspices of an Association like our own. The words of BACON occur to me as appropriate to be quoted here: "I hold every man a debtor to his profession, from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavour themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto."

R.I.B.A. Examinations.

To our younger members, I desire to bring home the importance of qualifying themselves, as soon as possible, for the Associateship of the Institute. To them I say: You must not allow yourselves to drop behind the times! Wherever we turn, tests of knowledge are instituted, or being instituted. The Church, the Law, the Civil Service, the Army, the Navy, the Practice of Medicine in all its branches even down to the mere selling of drugs, Accountants, Surveyors—all have their tests, and rightly so. Why should young architects be different? The passing of an examination is not an end in itself—it is only a means to an end. I deprecate the system of "cramming" in order to pass; but surely it must be satisfactory to every earnest student to know that there exists a standard (a minimum standard, perhaps) by which he can have his own progress and attainments gauged. Such a standard of measurement is now provided by the Examinations which the Royal Institute holds from time to time, and of which full particulars can be obtained from our Hon. Secretary; but which, I may briefly remind you, are divided into three stages—the Preliminary, the Intermediate, and the Final. The sooner the Preliminary Examination is passed the better. A youth should be able to do so when he leaves school; and if he holds certain certificates and produces certain drawings, he will be exempted from actually sitting for it. The reason that he should pass this examination as soon as possible after leaving school is that the *details* of the knowledge acquired there are liable to become obliterated in the course of a few years, and it is difficult to find time afterwards, when other matters are pressing, to revive those details. After he has served two or three years of his articles, the youth should, if he has made proper use of his time, be able to present himself, with confidence, for the Intermediate Examination; and,

at or soon after the expiry of his articles, the Final Examination should present no appalling difficulty. That is, provided he has, concurrently with office routine, availed himself of the opportunities open to all of acquiring the knowledge which every ardent student thirsts after.

Self-Culture.

I do not believe any would-be Architect can be *taught* his profession ; he must *learn* it for himself. Of course, tuition will *assist* him, and assist him immensely ; but the true education is drawn out of a pupil, not what can be forced into him.

In the days of my pupilage (I am speaking of five and twenty years ago) we had, in this town, not one tithe of the opportunities for advancement now presented to the rising generation. This Association in those days, did not hold out the helping hand to pupils that it does now ; its meetings were few and far between ; there were no outdoor meetings, such as we now have ; there was no Association Library. But some of us had Enthusiasm : we established a small society of our own ; we read papers, and discussed them ; we organised visits to ancient and modern buildings for ourselves. And I should like to see your Sketching Club more actively responsive to the efforts of your indefatigable Secretary during the summer months ; and I should like to see you, in the winter, holding regular meetings of your own in this room (our old Students' Society was indebted to the Lit. and Phil. Society for that), at which you would read and discuss your own papers, and exhibit and criticise your own designs and sketches. If you wanted assistance from elder men I feel sure it would be gladly extended ; but their constant presence might prove a restraint to the free expression and interchange of thought and opinion, which is so beneficial both to old and young.

Literary Side of Professional Work.

As to the writing and reading of papers, I sometimes think beginners in our profession scarcely realise the importance of being able to do something beyond mere Draughtsmanship. Remember, there is the art of Literary Composition to be fostered. In after life you will have important documents to write, specifications of all sorts, reports of all kinds, which should be masterpieces of definite diction ; terse, lucid, precise, concise, and elegant withal. Nothing will help you more in this direction than the writing of Papers or Essays, to be read before such meetings as I have suggested. And there is the art of Speaking before an audience to be acquired ; not necessarily a large audience, but one, perhaps, more critical. As Architects you need not be elocutionists. In our profession we are men of works, not of words. But the time comes to every Architect when he has to explain his designs before a body of clients, or to give evidence before a tribunal ; and the man who is, by nature or

training, or both, capable of expressing himself distinctly and succinctly then makes his mark and carries weight.

Professional Enthusiasm,

To one and all, I say cultivate Enthusiasm in your profession; do not be *fin de siècle*, *blasé*, cynical. If you are not enthusiasts when youth is on your side you never will be at all. The master minds of every profession are those who begin as enthusiasts and remain so to the end.

Statistics of Examinations.

To show that I am not exaggerating the importance of passing the Institute Examinations, let me point out that on its books there are at present the names of not fewer than 658 men, who have passed either the preliminary or intermediate stages. Also that for the preliminary examination this month, there have been 116 candidates, and for the intermediate 55; whilst for the Qualifying Examinations, to be held immediately, there are 180. These figures prove how widely it is felt that the future is fraught with possibilities which these Examinations provide for. A word to the wise is sufficient.

Public Interest in Architecture.

Observe, too, that the lay mind is constantly becoming more educated upon Architectural subjects, and as Professors of an Art we must keep ourselves not merely abreast with, but ahead of, other people. I think we have only to look at the crowded audiences which Mr. CRANAGE has brought together, at the University Extension series of lectures this year, to see that Architecture is deeply interesting to a large section of the community, and carefully studied by them; and we must, therefore, become ever deeper and more thorough in the Ethics, the Technique, and the History of our Art, or we will fail to impress our minds and work upon our generation.

University Extension Lectures.

And, by the way, let me here disclaim the credit which the R.I.B.A. Kalendar, just published, inadvertently gives to our Association for bringing Mr. CRANAGE to Newcastle. The credit is entirely due to the University Extension Committee. At the same time when your Committee learnt that arrangements had been made for such a course of lectures, they took every available means of bringing them before the notice of our members and their friends, and so, we trust, have helped, in some degree, towards the success of the series. On the application of your Committee, Mr. CRANAGE has kindly consented to deliver a lecture before this Association, his subject being "The Elizabethan and Renaissance Periods," and therefore, in a measure, supplementary to his course on Gothic Architecture.

Such an experience as this series of lectures in Newcastle is, let us trust, a foretaste of what we must not cease to hope for in connection with the Durham College of Science in this City. I mean that which we can now congratulate Liverpool upon having just obtained; the foundation, at its University College, of a Chair of Architecture, and the appointment of a Professor thereto, now an accomplished fact.

Library.

A few words as to our Library. It is fortunate that this new but important feature of our Association is under the care of Mr. CHARLEWOOD, an ideal librarian; a book-lover, not a book-worm; who delights to see books properly used, and who is sparing neither time nor pains to make the library as useful and complete, on its necessarily small scale, as circumstances permit. I understand from him that the library is being fairly well used, no fewer than 141 volumes having been lent out during the year; but we invite you to use it still more freely. It now contains about 180 bound volumes (some exceedingly valuable, which will repay your study of them a thousand-fold) besides many, as yet, unbound Pamphlets, Reports, Proceedings of Societies, &c. The Executive of the Public Library in Newcastle have been approached by your Librarian, in hopes that they may be induced to purchase, for their Reference Department, certain books recommended by the R.I.B.A., which are neither in our Library nor in that of the Lit. and Phil. Society. When we publish our next Catalogue, we intend to give lists of the Architectural books in the Reference Department of the Public Library, and in the Lit. and Phil. Library, as a Directory for Students.

Out-door Meetings.

Our out-door meetings, during the past summer, have been five in number. In town, we have visited the Rutherford College, by kind permission of its Architects, Messrs. OLIVER and LEESON, and of the Committee; and St. Andrew's Church, with special reference to the work being carried out there under Messrs. HICKS and CHARLEWOOD, the latter conducting us. Out of town, we have paid a visit to Finchale Abbey; another to Axwell Park, by permission of the Rev. J. W. NAPIER-CLAVERING, who himself acted as our guide, and where we saw some ingenious structural work being carried out under Messrs. HICKS and CHARLEWOOD. Prudhoe Hall and Catholic Church, the work of Messrs. DUNN and HANSOM, were also visited by leave of Mrs. LIDDELL. To all mentioned our grateful acknowledgments are due.

The annual excursion took place in July, when no fewer than 27 (a record attendance on such an occasion) drove from Thirsk to Coxwold; viewing there the interesting Late Gothic Church, with its

remarkable still later monuments in the chancel ; thence to Byland Abbey and Rivaulx Abbey, where, unfortunately, too little time was available for careful study, but sufficient was seen and noted to whet the appetite for other and longer visits.

Outside Affairs.

And now let us turn to matters not immediately connected with our Association, but of great interest to Architects. And I may note here (in parenthesis) that there seems to me no profession equal to our own for inspiring and stimulating intelligent interest in all that goes on in this busy world of ours. To paraphrase the words of TERENCE : " We are *Architects*, and, therefore, nothing appertaining to humanity is alien to us."

Mayoralty of Gateshead.

The re-election of our past President, Mr. W. H. DUNN, as Mayor of the sister borough of Gateshead, calls for our congratulations on the double honour thus bestowed upon him.

Recent Legislation.

During the year now fast drawing to a close, two Acts of Parliament have become law which are no doubt fated to materially affect our profession. I allude, first, to the " Local Government Act, 1894," commonly called the Parish Councils Act. So much has been recently published respecting this Act that I will not repeat its details, suffice it to say that, among other provisions, it creates numerous administrative bodies all over the country, and gives them powers to establish Public Libraries, Science Schools, Art Schools, Art Galleries, Museums, Baths, Laundries, Parks, and Cemeteries. There can be little doubt that, in many cases, these powers will be exercised ; and the Services of the Builder and Architect called into requisition, to what extent cannot be foretold. We know that the passing of the Education Act, in 1870, gave, and continues to give, rise to an enormous amount of building, affording perennial employment to the building trades at the expense of the long-suffering ratepayer. We have also seen that the establishment of County Councils has resulted in much building—chiefly, as yet, curious to say, in the erection of enormous Lunatic Asylums (no analogy is intended to be drawn). It can hardly be doubted that the Parish Councils will emulate in their humbler spheres the example of their older and bigger brethren. Money easily obtained is quickly spent ; and debts, municipal or corporate, quickly grow to appalling magnitude. Local public debts in England and Wales alone have, between 1875 and 1892, increased from under 93 millions to over 207 millions, an increment of nearly 115 millions of pounds in 17 years. In this facility for borrowing money on the security of the rates lies, I fear, one of the rocks ahead to be encountered in the coming century. Public bodies are permitted to extend the repay-

ment of loans over lengthened periods ; and if posterity is to derive benefit therefrom it is only right that posterity should help to pay the piper ; but we must not forget that posterity will have its own special necessities to provide for, its own hobbies to ride, its own fads to indulge in ; and the ever-increasing rates will, some time or other, reach a point when any long period of National depression may result in a crisis which will tax to the utmost the ingenuity of Chancellors of the Exchequer in the 20th century.

The other Act of Parliament which I think is bound to affect the building trades, more or less, is the "Finance Act of 1894." The largely increased death duties thereby imposed upon the property of wealthy men will fetter the owners of landed estates, will probably restrain the expenditure of money upon the erection and maintenance of large mansions and other estate buildings, and so react upon the building trades of this country in a manner which is possibly not yet dreamt of in our philosophy.

Advertisements.

The architectural aspect of our City must always be a matter of prime concern to us, and so I cannot refrain from referring to a matter which my predecessor touched upon last year. I mean the way in which our streets and buildings are defaced by advertisements, enormous letters and signs, attached to or surmounting the façades of our buildings, with entire disregard to their structural lines. To my mind, nothing more vulgar can be conceived than the mania for advertising running riot in such shapes. They are a standing menace, too, to public safety ; for, in course of time, the probable neglect of these features, accompanied by inevitable corrosion and decay, may result in serious accidents. I am far from advocating too much interference by Public Authorities with the liberty of the subject, or with the ownership of private property, but I do think these Authorities occasionally strain at gnats and swallow camels, in a remarkably inconsistent way. Not only in towns is this defacement going on, but the traveller by rail or road must needs have his sensibilities shocked by "execrable shapes" which rear their "miscreated fronts athwart his way." I allude to the boards stuck up by the advertising fiend in quiet country lanes and fields, extolling the merits of this, that, and the other condiment, medicine, or substance obtained by the action of caustic alkalies upon fats. Cleanliness may be next to godliness. Soap is, no doubt, an important factor towards that result ; but if its use has to be secured at the expense of our landscapes, so much the worse for our age and generation. And, not only by day are these things forced upon us, but even when night has fallen, our buildings, no matter how sacred or stately, are threatened by a new development of the craze. By means of lime-light and lenses the praises of anybody's manufactures can be projected across the dome of St. Paul's, and I believe actually have been upon the buildings surrounding Trafalgar Square.

As Architects we might do something to curb the use of objectionable signs, by providing upon our elevations panels or spaces where letters and the like can be inserted or attached. The Architect too often overlooks the fact that such things are necessary, and in their proper place legitimate; and if he covers every superficial foot of his building, that is not plate-glass, with architectural detail, he tempts the owner or tenant (as a rule, a modern Gallio who cares for none of these things) to eclipse the mouldings and the carving, however refined, with things never contemplated by the Architect's academic rules. This leads me on to a word or two upon Restraint in Design.

Restraint in Design,

Axwell Park, our recent visit to which I have already mentioned, is not a very remarkable building (its Architect was Mr. PAYNE, of London, who enjoyed a considerable practice in the North of England, for he also designed Belford, North Gosforth, and Bywell Halls) but it exemplifies what I call Restraint. "It stands four-square to all the winds that blow," and possesses dignity due to simplicity of form, which we lose if we fritter away our resources on small scale details, or by constructing picturesqueness. Such faults are not confined to one city or neighbourhood. It is general. Ever since the days when BARRY overlaid his greatest work with an exuberance of surface ornament, it has been the fashion to follow in that track. Now, I am glad to see signs that the tide is setting in another direction, and that the value of plain wall surfaces is being more and more appreciated. The success of one work of the past few years is clearly due to this. "New Scotland Yard," on the Thames Embankment, by Mr. NORMAN SHAW, appears to me a brilliant example of genuine architectural effect, legitimately obtained. Of course, we in the provinces, rarely have free scope. We can do little else than reflect the public taste of our respective localities. Lead it we may so far, but so far only; for if we get too much in front we lose our following.

Modern Streets.

Every owner, I presume, of every little twenty foot frontage, in a business street, wants to make the most of it; something quite different from and always taller (if he can manage it) than his neighbour on either side. So the architecture of our modern streets becomes a heterogeneous mixture of narrow vertical slices; whereas, one has but to look at Grey Street, and the old part of Grainger Street, to see that horizontal combinations only can give real dignity to the whole. And yet the streets I have named are free from monotony; but if we go out into the suburbs we will see row upon row of houses as like to each other as peas in a pod. I never saw a town, of the size and wealth of Newcastle, with so little beauty in its suburban streets. Of course, Architects are not

to blame for this, or at any rate very remotely. These houses are run up, half a dozen at a time, by speculators, who build to sell. But if we cannot practise we may at any rate preach. One of the great difficulties in securing a more lovely state of things lies in the system of back streets, which obtains in this city. Why should these be omni-present, or so unpleasantly obtrusive? In many towns you may look far to find them. Instead, you will see semi-detached villas, with gardens where our back streets would be. Each block being separate from its neighbours there is scope for individual treatment architecturally, and sanitarily there is better circulation of air. The cost need not be greater; for although more frontage is called for, and more external walling, there is no back street to swallow up land, to pave, to flag, to sewer, to scavenge, to watch, to light. Let us hope, that in some of the building estates about to be laid out in the neighbourhood, an attempt will be made to get out of the groove into which we, in the north, have fallen, and to provide modest but attractive detached or semi-detached dwellings, not too large or expensive for the average family. Years ago (and from time to time since) correspondence on this subject took place in the local newspapers, but as yet its ventilation has brought no tangible result. A word, too, in condemnation of the dog-in-the-manger like way in which some people hem in their grounds and gardens, by high walls; converting semi-rural roads or lanes into avenues of brick and stone, instead of verdure.

Recent Local Changes.

Newcastle is not rich in Architectural Interiors. A year or two ago we lost the Central Exchange, a very noble apartment. This year we have, to a large extent, lost the interior of the Central Station. Our first President's great work, with its subtle charm, arising from the harmonious blending of curved plan with curved roof-lines and the archivolt of its openings, has been irreparably marred as a work of art. There has been a gain in accommodation (and, possibly, in convenience); but I confess that I cannot look without depression upon the low sheds that have been tacked on to the east end of the station, and upon some other features that have been introduced into it. Another railway work now nearly completed, we may, on the other hand, be grateful for. I mean the Dean Street arch. "It might have been" a girder bridge; but, "greatly to its credit," the Railway Company has built a granite one; the curve of which, though not concentric with the older arch alongside (which was impossible), still harmonises with it, and one of the most striking "street-scapes" in Newcastle is thus preserved.

St. Nicholas' Steeple.

A short time ago the news came, with a shock to most citizens, that the lantern of the tower of our Cathedral Church of St.

Nicholas was in a dangerous condition. Its restoration, under Sir GILBERT SCOTT, a quarter of a century ago, was deemed to be effectual for a much longer period than has actually proved to be the case. Our smoke and acid-laden atmosphere, combined with want of attention to ironwork and pointing, has brought about a state of things which all must deplore. It is to be hoped that no time will be lost in making this world-famed structure again sound and substantial beyond the risk of accident, and that no considerations of precedence or parsimony will restrain our City Fathers from doing what is necessary. No question of Churchwardenship *versus* Municipality should be allowed to arise now. The treasure the city possesses in this steeple is unique. It has been imitated, but never copied. Even the greatest English architect of the last 200 years, who rivalled MICHAEL ANGELO's dome, never poised aloft another lantern like ours. There is a tradition that WREN, when the centering was removed from his Church of St. Dunstan in the East, watched the operation from London Bridge, apprehensive of the safety of that weak aftertype of the lantern which here, in Newcastle, has for centuries upreared its stately crown, and which we are bound to preserve for the admiration of the centuries that follow. I well remember when, in 1867, the dome over the south-east corner of the Central Exchange was destroyed by fire, the owner, when rebuilding, proposed to omit it altogether. The importance of the dome to the *tout ensemble* of Grey Street was felt to be such that a public subscription was instituted by the late Alderman DODDS (Chairman, at that time, of the Town Improvement Committee) to defray the cost, and so the integrity of the design was preserved. How still more important to the Architectural Repute of the City is the Tower of St. Nicholas !

Theatre Royal.

It has been publicly announced that the Theatre Royal ; one of GRAINGER's finest buildings, designed by BENJAMIN GREEN, the exterior after the Pantheon at Rome ; is, so far as the Auditorium is concerned, to be reconstructed within the next twelve months. Whether such internal reconstruction will be architecturally an improvement remains to be seen ; but, so far as I know, it has not transpired to what extent, if any, the façade in Grey Street will be interfered with. I may, however, express the hope that the Proprietors will regard themselves as trustees of a noble Work of Art ; and, as such, guard it from any injury.

Lit. and Phil.

Another work of GREEN's has undergone internal reconstruction lately. I mean the Library of the Lit. and Phil. Society. The ceiling, as GREEN left it, was a piece of good design ; unpierced, cambered, and coffered ; and its removal a few years ago, when

top-light became a necessity, was a distinct loss ; but, this year, much has been retrieved in carrying out the design of our past President, Mr. RICH.

Bamburgh Castle.

It must be a matter of congratulation to all British Architects and Archæologists, and to us in Northumberland especially, that the ownership of one of our most precious relics of antiquity, in changing hands this year, has become vested in a Nobleman who is not only able to appreciate, but able and willing, substantially, to prove his appreciation of all that is beautiful and interesting in his latest acquisition. Lord ARMSTRONG and his Architect have before them a delightful task in enhancing the natural and artificial beauties of Bamburgh Castle ; in the removal of what is base and unworthy of its age and grandeur, and the replacement of much that less erudite workers have, in their ignorance, destroyed.

Local Building Trades.

The building trades in this district, during the past year, have been, and promise to remain, fairly brisk ; perhaps because they have not, for some time past, been disturbed, like some other trades on Tyneside, by disastrous strikes. Long may they continue to be free from them. I was informed, a few weeks ago, that in connection with one important branch a Conciliation Board had lately been formed in this district, and was working, so far, harmoniously. If such Boards were generally established they would go far to allay the jealousies and distrust which lie at the root of all trade disputes ; and, if decisions arrived at by them were always loyally acquiesced in by those concerned, we should be appreciably nearer the millenium.

The relationship between the local Master-builders and our profession continues satisfactory ; a pleasing contrast to the condition of affairs in one other important centre, where disputes appear to have arisen difficult of settlement, unless mutual respect confidence and forbearance, such as obtain here, unite to smooth them over.

Closely bound up with Trade organization is the question of Apprenticeship, the decadence of which system calls urgently for some remedy or substitute. Although we are not yet, in this country, so badly off in this respect as seems to be the case in the United States of America (owing to the control there of trade matters being practically in the hands of foreign immigrants) we are, nevertheless, in the unfortunate position of witnessing the gradual, but inevitable, extinction of the old style of things, where the relations between master and apprentice were pre-eminently personal. What is to take its place ? Will the Modern Technical School be able to cope with the problem ? I doubt it : but to attempt to deal with the situation, and to review the whole subject of Building Trade

organization, with its infinite ramifications, would take a paper itself, nay, a series of papers, only to enter into ; and I feel that I am getting far beyond the proper limits of an address such as this.

Conclusion.

Let me bring its discursiveness to a termination, and in doing so briefly call attention to one or two matters contemplated by your Committee in the immediate future. They intend shortly to bring before you for consideration, and I trust approval, a revised set of Rules. The main object of such revision is to give our members at a distance a more direct interest in, and influence upon, the working of the Association. In furtherance of this object, you will observe from the syllabus, that we propose during the present session to hold one meeting in Sunderland, and another in Stockton. Last session we met once in Sunderland. This "going on circuit," as it was termed in a paper that I had the honour to read before this Association 11 years ago, I then suggested and still regard as one of the best means of keeping in touch with the whole of our profession in our Province, and to make ourselves not merely a Newcastle Society, or a Tyneside Society, but in fact, as in name, the NORTHERN ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION.
